



## **The Leadership Team of the New Department of Planning & Development Services:**

**Mark Wardlaw, Director**  
**Beth Murray, Assistant Director**  
**Darren Gretler, Deputy Director**  
**Pam Elias, Chief of Code Enforcement**  
**Rich Grunow, Chief of Project Planning**  
**Rick Lantis, LUEG Program Manager (Chief) of Land Development/Engineering**  
**Jeff Murphy, Chief of Advance Planning**  
**Vince Nicoletti, Chief of Support Services**

### **Director**

Mark Wardlaw has been selected to lead the new Department of Planning & Development Services (PDS) as its first Director.

Mark has been the Community Development Director in Mammoth Lakes, CA for the past seven years. Prior to joining Mammoth Lakes, he served as the Deputy Community Development Director and Planning Manager for Culver City and its Redevelopment Agency from 1998 to 2005. He spent the previous eleven years in San Diego, first with the City Planning Department and then with the Centre City Development Corporation and was part of the redevelopment effort of Downtown San Diego.

Mark received his Masters of Environmental Planning through the Graduate School of Architecture and Planning at Arizona State University and his Bachelors of Science from the University of Utah.

Throughout his career, Mark has demonstrated that he is a municipal and redevelopment executive who is successful at building and working with high-performance teams and leading organizations with active private and public development activity, and involved communities and stakeholders. Those who know his work product describe him as a practiced visionary who is able to face diverse challenges. Mark's breadth of experience in strategic planning, zoning, development services and permitting, project management, construction and finance will bring a unique perspective to improving customer service.

In accepting the position, Mark notes, *"I am looking forward to fostering a culture that is responsive, accountable and transparent. Our mission as the brand new Department of Planning and Development Services will be to provide the highest level of customer service through an efficient public-private land development process. On a personal note, my family and I are very excited about returning to San Diego where my wife and I first met and started our family."*



### **Assistant Director**

Beth Murray has been selected as the Department of Planning & Development Services first Assistant Director.

Beth has more than 20 years of increasing responsibility in managing planning and land use projects, community development programs and various other public initiatives. She has been with the City of San Diego since 1997 and has had experience in providing public service within governmental entities including moving from Senior Planner to Assistant to the City Manager, Special Projects, to Program Manager Business Office, to Assistant Deputy Chief Operating Office for the Land Use & Economic Development Group to Deputy Director of Economic Development, where she has served since 2008. Beth has a Master of City Planning from San Diego State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies from the University of Nebraska.

According to those who work with Beth, she has a proven track record of implementing change, building consensus amongst diverse groups, streamlining governmental processes, and building effective teams to accomplish collective goals. She has excellent interpersonal and leadership skills with a focus on customer service and is an effective communicator with a demonstrated ability to deliver creative solutions in the land use, planning and community development areas.

In accepting the position, Beth notes, *"This is about new beginnings – implementing a new General Plan, in a new department, a new building, and with a renewed focus on delivering exceptional customer service! I am honored to be a part of it. Coming from a small town in rural Nebraska I am particularly excited to work with San Diego County's culturally rich unincorporated communities. And I am looking forward to working with all of the people who share the goal of making the County a great place to live."*

Beth will begin work on Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **Deputy Director**

Darren Gretler has been selected as the new Department of Planning & Development Services' first Deputy Director.

Darren has been the Chief of the County's Building Division in the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) for the past five years. Darren led the Building Division, Zoning and Land Development counters through a difficult downturn in the economy and staffing reductions that could have drastically impacted the high levels of service expected by our county residents. Through extraordinary efforts from his entire team and several initiatives, including business process re-engineering efforts (BPRs), on-line tools, and other creative approaches, the permit center continues to operate with a strong commitment to service. Prior to joining DPLU, he served as a Land Use Environmental Group Program Manager for Public Works' Land Development-Private Development Review Division from 2005 to 2007. He spent the previous six years with the County working for County Supervisor Dianne Jacob first as a Field Representative/Policy Advisor and then as a Land Use Policy Advisor.

Darren, a native San Diegan, received his Bachelor of Arts in Communication from the University of California, San Diego and is working towards his Master of Business Administration from San Diego State University (SDSU).

Those who know Darren, say he has strong communication and relationship building skills, values team work and leadership skills, and is able to deliver creative solutions to customers.



In accepting the position, Darren notes, *“Creating a new department in the County is an exciting, unique opportunity. I look forward to working with all PDS staff and stakeholders to create a special place to work and do business for the benefit of County residents and communities.”*

Darren will begin work on Friday, September 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Code Enforcement - Chief**

Pam Elias is a credentialed mediator who began her career mediating neighborhood disputes and providing Hearing Officer services to the City of San Diego's Planning Department, Neighbor Code Compliance Division and City Attorney's Office. Pam has spent over 17 years managing Code Enforcement units for the cities of Chula Vista, and Oceanside and for the County. She has her Master is Public Administration from SDSU. Pam notes the following when thinking about her career: What I have enjoyed most about my tenure in Code Enforcement is helping people; working with community groups to improve their neighborhoods; and facing daily challenges by using creative problem solving to assist customers achieve property compliance. Pam will be the Chief of Code Enforcement for PDS.

*“It's time for change and PDS will make it happen!”*

### **Project Planning – Chief**

Following graduation from Michigan State University with a degree in Environmental and Natural Resource Policy Studies, Rich Grunow packed whatever belongings would fit in his car and drove west in pursuit of the California dream and a job in environmental planning. Rich has worked for the cities of El Cajon, Encinitas and San Diego where he initially worked in the City of San Diego's Development Services Department as a planner and CEQA practitioner. Rich later transferred to the City's Metropolitan Wastewater Department, where he would serve as a Senior Planner, project manager for wetland and upland mitigation projects, contract manager, and environmental analyst.

Rich joined the County team in 2006 and most recently served as the Chief of the Project Planning division. In PDS, Rich will be the Chief of Project Planning, which is charged with processing all privately-initiated discretionary land use applications in the unincorporated county. As a dedicated public servant, Rich is committed to implementing regulatory reform and enhancing customer service delivery while maintaining the department's mission to promote safe and livable communities.

*“The new department, new facility, and the many business changes that we will be making in the coming months will greatly improve our ability to serve our customers, which will in-turn enable us all to be better public servants.”*

### **Land Development/Engineering - Chief**

Rick Lantis began his career in 1981 in a private Civil Engineering and Land Surveying firm which specialized in private land development in San Diego County. Rick joined the County team in 2007, initially working for the County Surveyor checking Record of Survey maps. In 2008, Rick was promoted to Project Manager overseeing the processing of private development projects through the Department of Public Works. In 2011, Rick became the LUEG Program Manager for Land Development Review Teams. Rick will lead the land development engineering division in PDS as a LUEG Program Manager (equivalent to a Chief). Rick's private sector experience and perspective, as well as the relationships he has developed over the years, will continue to be invaluable to the new department and the County.

Rick received his Bachelors of Science Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies, with emphasis in math/physics and business management from New York Institute of Technology.



*"I see the formation of PDS as an exciting opportunity to continue to build upon and improve current cross departmental relationships. This ultimately leads to improved customer service and a stronger County team."*

### **Advance Planning - Chief**

Jeff Murphy started with the County of San Diego in October 2000 as a Planner II with the Department of Planning and Land Use. During his career with the County, Jeff went on to manage several sections and divisions within the DPLU including the Watershed Protection Program, Building Division, San Diego County Fire Authority, Advance Planning and Project Planning. While Jeff has had the opportunity to work in a variety of different areas of planning and land development during his tenure, his real passion has always been in Advance Planning, which focuses on policy development and long-range programs that coordinate growth and conservation in the unincorporated areas of the County. Prior to joining the County family, Jeff worked as a consultant with KPMG in their real estate services section and also the property tax division. Jeff is a native San Diegan and received a BS degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Cal Poly, Pomona and Master in Public Administration (emphasis in City Planning) from SDSU.

*"I am very excited about being a part of the new Planning & Development Services department and returning to the Advance Planning team. With the new culture and approach to customer service, I see a number of opportunities for us to modernize our regulations and remove barriers without cutting corners that sacrifice public safety and quality of life."*

### **Support Services - Chief**

Vince Nicoletti started with the County in 2000 at the Department of Parks and Recreation. As a project manager, he worked with many of our communities on park land acquisition, design and construction. In 2006, he joined the LUEG Executive Office where he served as a CAO Staff Officer, developing his organizational acumen and working closely with Board offices as well as land development stakeholders. Following the 2007 wildfires, he helped lead the effort to set up Local Assistance Centers across the County; an experience he describes as why he got into public service. Since 2009, he has worked with the Department of Planning and Land Use as Chief of the Support Services Division, overseeing finance, IT, human resources and administration. Vince will be the Chief of Support Services in Planning & Development Services.

Originally from New York, Vince received his Bachelors Degree from Michigan State University in Natural Resource Management, and more recently a Masters of Business Administration from SDSU.

*"Creation of a single new department is just the first step. Now the hard work really begins."*

